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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

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PRAYER

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others — that we are not always strong—
That we are sometimes overborne with care—
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled—when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?

—Richard C. Trench.

"IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR YOU THAT I GO AWAY"

TWO thoughts emerge from this saying of Christ's: first, that sorrow is good for us; second: because sorrow is good for us, then self-interest should reconcile us to sorrow. Neither of these thoughts is a pleasant one, in fact the second thought is simply a glorification of selfishness, because it invites us to appraise every event by its effect upon us. Perhaps it is on account of these two unpleasant, emerging thoughts, that we hear so little of the original utterance. Here is a rather striking statement, one that arrests the attention and provokes reflection. Yet it is seldom quoted, seldom alluded to; it holds no conspicuous place in our recollection of the sayings of Christ. We wonder if Christ really spoke the words. The Gospel of John is such a puzzle—it contains much that fits in with the picture of Christ already formed by the three preceding Gospels, and at the same time it contains very much that the Christ of our acquaintance could never have said, and never have done. It is not easy to think of him saying a thing, so unpleasant in its suggestions, as this.

Making that allowance, we must admit that the words do stimulate our minds. It is expedient for you that I go away, because I will send you, to take my place in your affection, the Spirit of Truth. We must infer, then, that the Spirit of Truth was a more desirable possession than the personal companionship of Christ himself. And if that Spirit of Truth could be possessed only through the surrender of the personal Companionship, then it was expedient for them that the personal Companionship should cease.

Why could they not have both at the same time? On that point the words are explicit—"If I go not away, he will not come unto you. The condition of his coming is that I depart." Love for the person, and love for the principle which the person represents do not easily dwell side by side in the same heart at the same time. We can well imagine that love for the person of Christ filled the disciples' hearts like a great blinding light. It was an excluding, absorbing, tyrannical preoccupation. The brightness of that affection paralyzed their powers of spiritual vision. They could

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see nothing, think of nothing, hear nothing, conceive nothing but Christ the personality. He dominated their thought as the headlight of a locomotive dominates the retina when you gaze full at it.

But there was just the trouble. It was not himself the person that should be the true object of their love, but the divine principles, the eternal laws of God, the undying Spirit of Truth, which he personified. If their love for him, the person, could go on beyond him, and find its resting place in the greater spirit of truth, which he personified, then their love for him was a true step in their enlightenment. Such love is the greatest educator in the world. But if their love was arrested by him the person, and ignored the principle back of the person, then he himself was his own greatest obstacle. He must go away that something greater than he—the Spirit of Truth—might come to them. Hearts are dust, even Christ's heart. It is heart's loves that remain. To shift their love from that piece of dust which was himself, unto that divine indwelling principle which remained after the dust, was ever Christ's care. For that is the way of love's enlightenment. Loving a person, we learn to love that immortal beauty of Holiness which makes the person lovable, until through Love's ministrations we learn to "acquaint ourselves at first hand with Deity."

—*Rev. Charles E. Park.*

The love that kept me through the passing night can guide and keep me still.

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

RELIGION FOR MATURITY

THERE is a widespread immaturity in society, especially in religion. Life is set to a key which offers less and less to serious and mature minds. Sports, radio programs, movies, and much of our drama and literature are on a plane that leaves a thoughtful person hungry and dissatisfied.

In the life of Jesus we get a marvellous picture of him at the age of twelve. The maturity of his questions and answers among the rabbis in the Temple show an independent mind. For nearly twenty years nothing is known of him. Then we get words and thoughts that for ageless maturity are matchless in human speech.

We discover that he had no particular association with children. He addressed himself to mature minds. Let men and women take him seriously and there will be no question about the younger generation, he seems to say.

But we have handed Jesus over to the child-mind and left him there! We keep him a Christmas Babe, his religion in the swaddling bands of immaturity, and sentimentality is the chief effect upon ourselves. In religion we say, "everything for the children," while we mature ones go on our way, untutored and unbothered. For many people religion is a jumble of childish memories, badly taught Sunday School lessons, and a wistful regret that nothing is left for us in life's roaring stream of reality. "Life Begins at Forty" is worth considering in religion. Childish conceptions of religion will not bear the weight of life's experience. Maturity must claim its own. We must seek to solve serious problems with men's minds.

For a while let us agree with Jesus that for men and women there is only one problem and that is the problem of just men and women. Grown people are the world's chief problem, not children! For our comfort we ought to remind ourselves that the call to us is not a call to vanished childhood, but to all that our spirits know of toil, disappointment, perplexing thought and unsolved mystery.

Mentally, for a short period of life, it is ours to think as a child, feel as a child, speak as a child. But we lose most of life if we reject the rest of it—"When I became a man I put away childish things."

The world that refuses to grow up is a dangerous world. Arrested development and prolonged childhood make that kind of a world. It will be a wise and blessed world when we choose the Jesus of maturity.

—*George Lawrence Parker,*
in *The Boston Transcript.*

It is so that we must come to the sense of the deepness of the blessing of the life we live. Go into the heart of it, at whatever labor and pain; enter mightily into its duties; watch not for its shadow alone, as complainers do, but most of all for its light. We may well thank God, and take courage, and march on, when we know that the pillars of cloud by day and of fire by night, are set fast in the divine order, to guide us on our way. Let us be sure that all is well whatever comes, while we trust and *stand fast* and *strive;* and only hopeless, and rightly hopeless, when we want what we are in no wise willing to *earn.* The glory and glow of life come by right living. Now, believe me, God hides some ideal in every human soul. At some time in our life we feel a trembling, fearful longing to do some good thing. Life finds its noblest spring of excellence in this hidden impulse to do our best. There is a time when we are not content to be such merchants or doctors or lawyers as we see on the dead level or below it. The woman longs to glorify her womanhood as sister, wife, or mother. Here is God,—God standing silently at the door all day long,—God whispering to the soul, that to be pure and true is to succeed in life, and whatever we get short of that will burn up like stubble, though the whole world try to save it.

—*Robert Collyer.*

He: "I know you didn't dream I was going to propose."

She: "Well, what time have I had to dream?"

GRIZZLY BEAR IS MOST DANGEROUS WILD ANIMAL IN NORTH AMERICA

IN the caverns of the Rockies and the Sierras the grizzly bear, like many a bold human bandit, has his lair. He's proud of his reputation as the most dangerous and most hunted wild animal in North America.

When the shadows fall over the valley below, the grizzly creeps down out of his mountain fastness and steals out on the ranches to pounce upon the choicest of the cattle. He's a blood-thirsty terror, for often he kills an animal, sucks its blood and then is off after another victim. He can kill a bull with one stroke of his powerful paw, and, if he likes, he is strong enough to carry it off with him to his mountainous lair.

He isn't particular about his food, though, and will eat anything from a cow to ants and crickets. He even dines on watermelons and raw potatoes, and he is never happier than when licking his paws dripping with stolen honey, while the angry bees swarm about him and try to sting through his armor-like hide.

The grizzly bear is a thoroughly bad character. He isn't even good to his own family. He never plays with his little cubs, like most bears, but will cold bloodedly desert them, or even kill them. His poor wife does all the looking out for the children and will fight desperately to protect them.

Clumsy as he looks, the big fellow can travel very swiftly away from danger. He is always on the watch and has such a keen sense of smell that it is hard for hunters to fool him with traps or even to get a glimpse of him. One famous old grizzly was hunted for 15 years before anyone was able to get a shot at him.

The grizzly is a desperate fighter. He never gives up until the last breath. A hunter who hasn't provided a way of escape after he shoots is in great danger of being killed by the raging animal. There is no closed season for grizzly hunting!—*Selected.*

Repetition is the mother of skill.

CORRESPONDENCE AND APPEALS

MISS ETHEL H. STUDLEY, *Chairman*
56 School Street, Hingham, Mass.

If you wish to become a member of this Department, please send the Chairman the following information:

Your name, age and address (give your name in full, also your husband's first name); names and ages of your children; or, if you are not married, names and ages of your brothers and sisters; name and address of your minister.

State clearly whether you wish (1) to correspond with someone; (2) to study by mail; (3) to appeal for some article on our approved list, which does not include money or clothing.

Be sure to give all the information requested.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice must be sent to the Chairman of this Department.

TO OUR CHAIRMEN, OLD AND NEW, GREETINGS

YOUR last year's work ended with your May reports. Perhaps it would be well to begin this next year with a few questions and answers.

Q. How does a chairman obtain the name if she wishes a correspondent?

A. Apply to Miss Ethel H. Studley, Ch., 56 School St., Hingham, Mass.

Q. What does she do next?

A. She records the name in her alphabetical list, and either passes it on to the member in her branch who requested it, or starts the correspondence herself.

Q. Does she have to report the name of the member who has taken the name?

A. No.

Q. What does she do if the correspondent asks for clothing?

A. She sends the letter to 56 School St., Hingham, Mass., and also explains to her correspondent that it is against the rules to send money or clothing.

Q. What does she do if her correspondent changes her name or address?

A. She reports to 56 School St., Hingham, Mass.

Q. How does a chaiman obtain the name in order to answer an appeal?

A. She reports to 56 School St., Hingham, Mass., what articles she has on hand, and how many appeals she can answer, and a name is sent to her.

Q. May she send a second box or package to the same address?

A. No; but she may use her judgment in sending packages to her own correspondent.

Q. What does she do if she receives a letter from someone not on her list, asking for a correspondent or for some article?

A. She does not answer the letter, but sends it to 56 School St., Hingham, Mass.

Q. What does she do if her correspondent does not answer letters?

A. She reports to 56 School St., Hingham, Mass.

Q. Why should every chairman have a copy of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* each month?

A. Because in it will be found the names which may be adopted as correspondents, or to whom articles may be sent, and also because instructions about Cheerful Letter work will appear in the magazine.

Q. How many names may a branch adopt?

A. As many as it wishes.

Would it not be a help if all chairmen would keep these questions and answers where they may be consulted easily if a question arises? If you have any more problems, please send them in, and we will answer them in the next issue.

GREETINGS TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS

WE are sorry that some people who ask to join our Exchange do not send the necessary information. At the beginning of a new year of work—for our work goes right on during the summer—we want to say again that we must have the correct first names of both husband and wife, and the correct names of the children, with the ages of all. We do not want nicknames or pet names. Also will you please be sure to say whether you want someone to write to you or to send you something which we are allowed to send. At our last meeting in May, when we had visitors from all parts of the United States, we were very glad to be able to exhibit some of the pretty table mats and other useful articles which had been sent to us as samples from our correspondence friends.

CORRESPONDENCE

WITH the beginning of a new work year, we number our requests beginning with number one, and shall follow the numbering throughout the year, in order to make it easier to send in for names. A chairman has only to give the number that she wishes, adding if she cares to, a second or third choice in case the one she chooses has already been taken.

There are several requests from young girls from twelve to seventeen years old. We should realize that these girls will in a few years be quite old enough to be adopted by any of our older members, and why can we not give them the pleasure of a few years' extra correspondence, if they wish it, by adopting them now? This would be a very interesting work for some Junior Alliance to start at the beginning of the year. We have:

1. A fifteen year old girl in Arkansas who likes to read and sew, but who cannot go to school much as she has to stay at home to help her mother.

2. A little girl in Virginia, ten years old, whose pastor writes, "She is a nice, bright, deserving little girl."

3. A sixteen year old girl in Arkansas, whose mother is on our list. Her hobby is needlework.

4. A fifteen year old girl in Texas whose mother is on our list. She is the only child at home, as her six brothers and sisters are all married.

5. A girl in Arkansas, thirteen years old, who does not go to school all the time. She is in the fifth grade, and likes to read and write letters.

6. A girl in Tennessee, thirteen years old, who wants to write to someone of her own age. (But perhaps someone who is a little older and who could write more helpful letters would be just as acceptable.)

7. Another Arkansas girl whose mother is on our list. This girl is eleven and she wants to write to some young person.

8. A thirteen year old girl in North Carolina who has only one brother left at home.

There are also several women waiting to be adopted.

APPEALS

REQUESTS come in continually for quilt material, rug material, reading matter, bits of colored embroidery thread, things to please the children, sugar and salt bags with which to line quilts. Can we not keep these requests answered to date throughout the new year?

RURAL SCHOOLS

MRS. LAURA M. HURST started "Rural Schools" three years ago, and has worked hard to make it into a thriving Department. She now hands it over to Miss Marie W. Johnson, another member of our Central Committee.

Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock during a thunderstorm.

—*Stevenson.*

If you see a wrong, HIT IT.

CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

IT is a great pleasure to welcome so many friends from distant places. We are making our annual reports as brief as possible so that you can tell us of your good deeds and ask questions of the chairmen with whom you have only a corresponding acquaintance.

Beside joining the chairmen of the other committees at three Workshop Conferences in Leominster, Mass., Montclair, N. J., and Providence, R. I., I have spoken at eight Alliance meetings and the Central Committee members have spoken eight times. Articles about our work have appeared in *The Axis, The Christian Register* and *The Cheerful Letter Magazine.*

We are grateful to the 178 chairmen who have returned the Questionnaires. We hope to hear from the other 67 Branches, for we need your reports to complete our records and acquaint us with the good work you have accomplished. If any chairman has not received the Questionnaire please let us know, and a duplicate will be forwarded.

In planning our work for next year there are two things I hope we can accomplish—a larger circulation of *The Cheerful Letter Magazine.* All chairmen and correspondents should have a copy, for each month there will be helpful suggestions about the different departments, as well as enrollment blanks for Correspondence and Appeals. Please have several members on your committee, for lone chairmen have a hard time and cannot accomplish as much as they would like to. A large committee can create interest in correspondence, collect articles for Rural Schools and appeals, discover a Home Study teacher in the Alliance group, decide whether books and magazines shall be sent to a new Library, or help restock the shelves of an established one, or go to a local center.

Thank you for all the work you have done which has made this a banner season. Now we will have the reports of the Department Chairmen and you will realize what an eventful year it has been.

ANNA E. SIBLEY, *Chairman.*

REPORT OF SECRETARY

In order to save time and repetition I will give a very short summary of our meetings for the past year. The heads of our Departments will speak for themselves and show the splendid work they have done.

Last year we had over 100 present at our annual meeting, and our guests came from all over the United States and Canada.

Eight monthly meetings were held as usual on the first Friday of each month, October to May inclusive.

Our Chairman, Miss Sibley, presided at all the meetings. The devotional services have been led by Mrs. Wise, the President of the General Alliance, Miss Sibley and members of the Central Committee—Miss Allen, Miss Coburn, Mrs. Neilson, Mrs. Barber, Miss Johnson, Mrs. Hussey.

The Central Committee has met eight times on the afternoons of the regular meetings. The work of the Exchange was planned at these meetings.

In November a social hour followed the meeting and doughnuts and coffee were served. This enabled us to become better acquainted. We were honored by having Dr. Frederick M. Eliot and Dr. Everett M. Baker as guests.

In December Mrs. George McFaul, accompanied by Mrs. Royal Lapham, sang "O Night Divine," and led the group in "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem." The Exchange had a Christmas gift of an old silver urn and coffee pot, given by an interested friend. The regular Christmas work was discussed.

The other meetings were principally given to conferences and discussions on the work and its problems. Exhibits were made from time to time of things sent to, and received from, rural schools and correspondents.

The total attendance was 466, representing 48 branches. This year Hingham heads the list, with Lexington second and Wollaston third. Eight other branches have been represented at all the meetings.

The regular Questionnaires numbering 245 were sent to all chairmen, and to date 178 have been returned. The information received has been sent to the various department heads, and has been a great help in making out their reports. It is never too late to send in your Questionnaire; every report, no matter how small, is welcome and needed. It is our aim to get an answer from every Cheerful Letter Chairman. We are vitally interested in making these responses 100%. Two hundred forty-five strong can do a splendid work. In union there is strength.

Your Chairman, Miss Sibley, has been striving the past year to have each chairman, as well as each correspondent, have a subscription to the magazine. It is our mouthpiece and a great help, especially to new chairmen.

I wish to thank all of you who have responded so well.

Respectfully submitted,
EFFIE D. STONE, *Secretary.*

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF CORRESPONDENCE AND APPEALS

AT the close of my first year as Chairman of Correspondence and Appeals, it seems well to present my report back to, for I must be assured of time to say a few most heartfelt thank-you's: first, to our Chairman, Miss Sibley, who has devoted very much time and thought to the perplexities of this department; second, to the Central Committee, who have loyally authorized any new ventures; third, to the local chairman who have cooperated in establishing a somewhat new plan, more or less difficult to explain on paper. Lastly, most honorable mention goes to those chairmen who, in listing their names, proved their familiarity with the English alphabet in its good old-fashioned form of A to Z.

With the help, then, of everybody, the department has been handling some 1200 correspondents, with the whole U. S. A. as a field. Add to this 180 chairmen, allow each chairman even one letter-writing member, add some 300 who are listed as appeals only, do not forget the 150 on the waiting list, and you will see that it is the duty of this department to maintain harmony among what a very elastic arithmetic will prove to be about 2000 people, widely differing in geographical location, economic interests, religious views, social and intellectual background. Is it reasonable to expect any volunteer organization to manage this ever-increasing number of people without a very strong central office? My efforts this year have been directed to strengthening this office, obtaining a correct list of names, separating correspondents from appeals, and reducing our too long waiting list by the avoidance, as far as possible, of duplication in the adoption of names. To carry out this last purpose, it has been necessary to publish numbers rather than names in printing the requests, for only by so doing can the chairman be assured that only one branch adopts the name.

The Home Study Department numbers about twenty-five pupils. This department could be increased if more members would volunteer as teachers.

I have spoken at two Alliance meetings concerning the Cheerful Letter work.

No report in actual figures can be given of the endless bundles of quilt pieces, rug material, books, magazines, greeting cards, games, scrap books, puzzles, newspaper clippings, Christmas boxes, etc., that have been sent, but if we could trace them in miniature, we should see a veritable network spread over our Southern states.

This is the past; what of the future? With a stronger central office to keep accurate records and avoid duplication of names, to furnish necessary information about the families, and to give general advice, even more work than we are now doing could be accomplished with much less waste of time and money. This office can be strengthened only through the cooperation of the chairmen, who should keep accurate up-to-date lists and report all changes.

Again I heartily thank you all for your loyalty in this my first year, and shall look forward to an even better year in trying to carry out the original purpose

of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, namely, "to bring a word of cheer and comfort to the lonely and sorrowful in every part of our country that we can reach."

Respectfully submitted,
ETHEL H. STUDLEY, *Chairman.*

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF BIBLE DEPARTMENT

Bibles seem to be in great demand, especially in the South. Texas, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas have all had Bibles, and many notes of appreciation have been received.

The records show 64 Bibles and some reading matter for a Sunday School teacher have been sent out this year.

We are most grateful for a gift of 70 Bibles from the Sunday School Committee of the First Parish, Cambridge.

Many thanks to all who have helped in this branch of Cheerful Letter work.

Respectfully submitted,
MARTHA C. BUCEK, *Chairman.*

REPORT OF SCRAPBOOK CHAIRMAN

SAMPLE scrapbooks have been made, many greeting cards and postals have been reconditioned and assembled, and patterns for Christmas tree chains have been sent twelve chairmen. Many scrapbooks have been received from several branches, also materials for use in making others—short stories, Thornton Burgess stories, cross word puzzles, crochet patterns and pictures.

Miss Sibley and I were invited to the Lexington Alliance Scrapbook day—an interesting and enjoyable experience.

Respectfully submitted,
ALICE C. BARBER, *Chairman.*

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF LIBRARIES

The scope of the Cheerful Letter work is always impressive. Also let us be proud of the geographical distribution of our members. A work so truly national in character must do a vast amount of good. Let us be alert in the choice of material, remembering that we are cultivating habits leading to the worthy use of leisure time, stimulating ideals we hold most precious.

During the past year, over 4,300 magazines and more than 7,000 books have been sent out. We have sent to all the usual places, the mountain settlement schools; consolidated and high schools, mostly in the South; and community libraries which we hope are building toward public libraries sometime.

Several schools for the colored have received generous donations this year and one junior college has been glad of more advanced material that was available. Local institutions receive most welcome magazines, too heavy to send very far away.

We are always glad of books and magazines and thank the Alliances which have helped so generously this year. All Souls, New York, again leads off, followed by Montclair, N. J., Washington, D. C., Germantown, Pa., Dayton, Ohio, Detroit, Mich., Pittsburgh, Pa., Providence, R. I., and many Massachusetts branches, of which the following were especially active: Medford, Dover, West Newton, King's Chapel, Waverley, Lexington, Hingham, Hubbardston, Wollaston, Winchendon, West Roxbury and Leominster.

Respectfully submitted,
LILLIAN W. RANDALL.
Chairman.

REPORT ON RURAL SCHOOLS

THE Rural School work has finally proved itself important and valuable enough to stand alone as one of the Departments of the *Cheerful Letter Exchange.* During the past year over seventy teachers have applied for our help and about sixty schools are on our list. Fifty-three branches have adopted teachers and most all have enjoyed successful contacts with them. Six branches have more than one teacher. According to reports received, three hundred and twenty packages have been sent by local

chairmen; and about one hundred packages have gone from Headquarters. A very splendid record!

All this work is done by letter and it takes time to contact a teacher and a branch chairman, with many letters of explanation and finally the adoption by a branch. All questions and difficulties must be settled by the Rural School chairman.

Bear in mind that the rural teacher is not familiar with the Exchange and it is up to the branch chairman to make the teacher understand our work and what we are able to do. We are just interested folk who are willing to share second-hand school materials where they are really wanted. Postage must always be considered and if a local branch is not able to appropriate an amount for mailing, then it becomes necessary for the local chairman to devise ways and means to earn the required amount.

"Rural Schools" as presented at any Cheerful Letter Conference sounds most thrilling and chairmen immediately want to adopt a school. When presented again at a local Board Meeting, members at once start to wonder where materials will come from. It really is easy work and so satisfactory. First of all—it does mean correspondence, for how would we know about a teacher and school without the exchange of letters! We cannot escape our purpose, the **cheerful letter!** Lists of second-hand school materials, printed by this Department, and read twice a year at your open Alliance Meetings will mean more donations for your packages. A box or large paper shopping bag, labelled "Rural School," placed in plain sight, will remind members to deposit material there for the Rural School.

In some of the poorer schools, where only a table, benches, one book for each child, blackboard and axe are supplied, our many second-hand helps have aided the teacher and pupil more than words can ever tell, for our supplies help to make the lessons so interesting that pupils do not want to miss classes. When a teacher has charge of five or six grades in one room, extra materials occupy the children of the classes not in session. The holiday season has certainly proved that there is a school Santa Claus, for many of the branches send a Christmas Party in a box.

A library in a small country school means more reading during school for the children and better reading in the home.

Our Cheerful Letter work seems to be accomplished by faith and "cheerful letters," and so it is with this Department. Hundreds of letters and papers are exchanged with superintendents and teachers, to secure all possible information before a school is adopted. Now that the Department has come into its own, we want to make it seem real to the branches. We have, with a poster, pictures of some of our teachers, schools and children, also some of the work done by the pupils. Never did we dream that the teachers would cooperate so well in this exhibition. It is beautiful work, educational and spiritual. Surely this exhibit bespeaks the future of this Department.

Occasionally we are asked, why do we send to the South? It is because less money is allocated to Rural Schools in the South than in some of our other States, and because we are glad to help further a child's education in any field.

One teacher writes: "We have opened our hearts to you. We only want what you want to give. If you could see how appreciative these children are, you would feel rewarded for all the good work you are doing for the rural communities."

And one chairman writes: "Cheerful Letter work has taken on a new life since I introduced our rural school to the members of the Alliance. Each month we wait eagerly for our teacher's letter."

So, on with the good work, and many thanks for what you have done. May more branches join us next September, when the schools and teachers are assigned for another year.

Respectfully submitted,

LAURA M. HURST.

REPORT OF TREASURER

THIS has been the banner year for Sunshine bags and West Newton heads the list with $36.30, followed closely by Wellesley Hills, Canton, Roxbury, New York-All Souls, Wollaston, Kingston, Boston-First Church, Boston-King's Chapel, and Dorchester First. Our yellow Sunshine bags are very important for their contents support the *Cheerful Letter Magazine*, without which the Exchange could not carry on. It not only carries messages of cheer, inspiration and interest to readers of all ages and types, but gives current information about the various departments of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. It is the little things that count and when you realize that it takes about $100.00 a month to edit and publish our Magazine you can see how grateful we are to you who make it possible. We hope you all subscribe for it and feel proud in the part you take as publishers.

Respectfully submitted,

EDITH L. JONES, *Treasurer.*

AN EVENING PRAYER

Oh Lord, tonight I cannot pray—
The thousand things I have to say,
The grateful praises I would sing,
Pleas for forgiveness I would bring,
Make up too great a load of prayer
For my weak stumbling words to bear.
Oh Lord, each prayer that comes from me
Is put into my heart by Thee;
Wilt thou then take as prayer tonight
My Cherry Tree, all flower bedight?
There in my garden surely stands
A miracle of thine own hands.
In fragrant purity it grows,
A glory of unmelting snows . . .
Might not a gift so passing fair
Be offered as an evening prayer?

—*Helen B. G. Sunderland.*

There are some spectacles, said the traveler, that one never forgets.

Tell me where I can get a pair, said an old lady in the audience, I'm always forgetting mine.

A SMILE OR TWO

Sitting in a concert-hall waiting for the concert to begin, a man, seeing a little boy in front of him looking at his watch, bent forward and asked, "Does it tell the time?"

"No," answered the little boy. "You look at it."—*Pearsons.*

Tenant (complaining): "There's a dozen holes in this roof that the rain comes through. How long do I have to put up with it?"

Landlord: "Well, what is today's forecast?"—*Christian Science Monitor.*

Judge: "Speeding, eh? How many times have you been before me?"

Speeder: "Never, Your Honor. I've tried to pass you on the road once or twice, but my old bus will only do fifty-five."—*U. S. S. Colorado Lookout.*

He: "I want to know, once for all, who is boss in this house?"

She: "You'll be much happier if you don't try to find out."—*U. S. S. Tennessee Tar.*

"If the Dean doesn't take back what he said to me this morning, I am going to leave college."

"What did he say?"

"He told me to leave college."—*Columbia Jester.*

"My brother is working with 5,000 men under him."

"Where?"

"Mowing lawns in a cemetery."—*West Point Pointer.*

A little fellow of 5 years fell and cut his upper lip so badly that a doctor had to be summoned to sew up the wound.

The mother, in distress, could not refrain from saying:

"Oh, doctor, I fear it will leave a disfiguring scar."

Tommy looked up into her tearful face and said:

"Never mind, mamma, my mustache will cover it."

AN EXPERIENCE OF ARAB HOSPITALITY

IT was the supreme hour of sunset. Just then we came in sight of Palmyra, pausing for a few moments on the last slope of the hills as we gazed upon a scene of stupendous beauty. Gilded by the rays of the lowering sun, the huge columns of the ruined city towered against a sky of pale cerulean blue. Here and there were a cloud of mish-mish blossom, a palm, or the tips of a pomegranate tree, showing above a blank and lifeless wall. Towards the horizon, on either side, stretched the hard sunbaked reaches of the Syrian desert. The silence was so intense that the place might have been uninhabited.

We descended the hill and reached the first of the many huge columns, brave survivors of a splendor which once dared to challenge the supremacy of Rome. Here a small grinning urchin, scantily clad, became our guide. We enquired for the sheik of the village; and, from the running board of our car, upon which he had perched, the urchin waved us on. "Dughri! Dughri! Straight on!"

* * *

We bumped along a sandy track between walls inscrutable as the East itself, mud erections beaten together by hand and dried by the sun. Here and there a humble mud dwelling was supported by a fluted column, ornately carved. At last the sheik's house was reached,—a small square box of a place built round a courtyard. The urchin ran in and informed the Headman that unexpected guests had arrived; and in a moment the sheik emerged, a tall, venerable, white-haired man, who welcomed us courteously. The almost uncanny silence which had greeted our entrance into Palmyra was suddenly broken; the courtyard became filled with clamor. An astonishing number of men and boys appeared, apparently from nowhere. Each seized a portion of our luggage, well-nigh tearing it to pieces in his zeal to help. We three visitors were conducted to the one guest chamber. Here, once we were alone, we stood eyeing the one small bed, draped in doubtful looking blankets and covered by a torn mosquito net. There were a few rugs on the floor and these, we decided, would be preferable to the bed. Each, accordingly, chose a corner of the floor upon which to unpack.

* * *

A moment later, the door was flung open, without ceremony, and an Arab entered with the inevitable coffee. This is made with cardamon seed and is bitter; but it was more palatable than the sickly-sweet pink sherbet which succeeded it. We were obliged to accept both, for refusal of hospitality is unthinkable amongst the Arabs. As we put down our glasses, Sheik Mohammed entered, followed by a line of youths ranging in years from thirty to two, all of whom were introduced as his sons. As is the custom, no mention was made of the ladies of the family. In a mixture of Arabic and French, we conversed. Mohammed seemed pleased to see us, and promised us a feast that night. To pass the time till then, we set out to explore.

Palmyra impressed us as a city of columns, and indeed there were over fifteen hundred in one street. Many have fallen and lie half buried in sand, but others still remain, a proud testimony to the beauty which once drew merchants and travelers from every corner of the earth.

* * *

The short Eastern twilight had faded and stars twinkled in a deep blue sky, when we returned to the sheik's house at the appointed time. Hungry as we were, we were yet slightly apprehensive of what might be in store; for Arab hospitality is apt to be somewhat too generous for Western ideas. Our host, who considered himself a traveled, enlightened man, showed it by an unusual display of utensils provided for the meal. One fork between the three of us, two knives and one glass, the latter painted with forget-me-nots and the words: "When you drink, think of me."

We sat upon a floor in a close circle,

and in the center was placed a huge copper in which our dinner had been roasted. Upon this we fell to, ignoring the fork and using our fingers in imitation of our host. Our manipulations were far less successful than his and there was a continual recourse to handkerchiefs. Mohammed, however, managed in a manner almost miraculous to eat without soiling his hands. Picking out a particularly succulent bit from the copper, he would lean forward and, before we knew what had happened, he had popped the morsel into our surprised mouths! Good manners demanded that we should swallow and smile.

* * *

The younger members of the family, meanwhile, were squatted on the ground round the walls, staring at us as if we were a show. The room was the usual empty square, with bare white walls. Evidence, however, of the sheik's travels hung upon one of them; for, displayed against a priceless piece of gold and pink Bagdad silk, hung a black cotton umbrella, one of the huge, unsightly ones sometimes carried by golfers. Anything more incongruous than the contrast between the exquisite silk and the dilapidated umbrella could hardly be imagined.

After the meal, one of the sons made coffee in the native fashion over a hole in the ground. Later, when Sheik Mohammed had retired, we strolled out. The streets were dark chasms, cut sharply by bands of moonlight. Upon a heap of rocks we sat and gazed over the desert; the air was delicious and the stars incredibly large. For a long while we lingered, recalling the story of Queen Zenobia, under whose rule Palmyra had reached to dazzling heights of fame and prosperity. Our room in the sheik's house had little appeal for us and the night was far spent when, at last, we threw ourselves down upon the floor in the three corners of the room.

—*Christian Science Monitor.*

Life is not a matter of reputation, but of character.

GOD UNDERSTANDS

It is sweet to know,
When we are tired, and when the hand of pain
Lies on our hearts, and when we look in vain
For human comfort, that the Heart Divine
Still understands these cares of yours and mine.

Not only understands, but day by day
Lives with us while we tread the earthly way,
Bears with us all our weariness and feels
The shadow of the faintest cloud that steals
Across our sunshine; ever learns again
The depth and bitterness of human pain.

—*Author Unknown.*

Manchukuo's all-purpose soyabean, already used for rubber, butter substitutes, varnish, flour, candy, celluloid, medicine, animal food, fertilizer and chop-suey sauce, is now used in Japan as the raw material for rayon. Rayon is made from the husks, heretofore used only by the farmers of Manchukuo for thatching their houses and for fuel. The bean is also made into a milk substitute said to give amazing strength to babies in regions where cows' milk is scarce.

A man in Chicago was grumbling about the heat. Said another, who had just returned from a trip through the South:

"Hot! Boy, you don't know what hot is. One day this week in Mississippi I saw a dog chasing a cat and they were both walking."—*Hartford (Conn.) Courant.*

GIFTS YOU SHOULD MAKE

To your enemies—forgiveness
To your opponents—tolerance
To a friend—your friendship
To a child—a good example
To your parents—respect and affection
To all men—charity

MANKIND'S MOST ELEMENTARY SOCIETY FOUND AMONG WESTERN INDIANS

ABOUT the most elementary form of society known to mankind existed a few generations ago among the Ute, Paiute, and Shoshoni Indians who lived in the area of the Great Basin west of the Rocky Mountains.

The backwardness of these people resulted largely from their isolation in the sage-covered valleys and mountains of their infertile land. By necessity they were essentially food gatherers. They had no domesticated crops and lived largely on the nuts, berries, seeds, and roots they could gather. They ate deer, mountain sheep, and antelope when they could get them, but usually had to be content with rabbits, gophers, rats, and mice.

Because of the simplicity of customs and the close association of man and nature in this area, the anthropologist is able to trace the effect of the quest for food upon many features of society. This is the view of Dr. Julian H. Steward, Smithsonian Institution anthropologist, who had just made a comprehensive report on the social and political system of the nomadic Indians of the Great Basin. He shows that the structure of native society depended to a very considerable extent upon the exigencies of life in this area. He does not seek, the report stresses, to lay down any law of economic determinism. Historical, biological, and psychological factors have played important roles. Many features of Great Basin society, however, were strictly delimited by activities concerned with finding enough to eat.

Outstanding differences, Doctor Steward found, followed regional variations in the natural environment. Some localities, such as the habitat of the Gosiute and Western Shoshoni in the central part of the area, were in a famine belt. Starvation was frequent and cannibalism not unknown. The population density was as low as one person to 30, 40, or even 50 square miles.

Because there was not enough food in any locality to support large numbers, individual families were obliged to remain in isolation the greater part of the year. Consequently, the individual family, or at best a small group of related families, was the largest permanent unit of society. The movements of this tiny group were governed by the family elder, or head man. Occasionally, however, a good pine nut harvest or a successful community antelope or rabbit hunt provided enough food to support a considerable group for a few weeks. Eager for association with friends and relatives rarely seen during the year, many families assembled to dance and enjoy festivities. At such times temporary leaders took charge of communal activities.

A few localities were well watered and more fertile. These permitted from 50 to 100 persons to live in more or less permanent association. Gathering seeds together, hunting together and dancing together, they had the beginning of a band organization with permanent leaders.

The highest form of political organization occurred among the Northern Shoshoni and many of the Ute. The horse, which they acquired at an early date from the Spaniards, gave them a great advantage over the Western Shoshoni. As they could travel into the Great Plains, they came to rely on the bison rather than on seeds and roots. The advantage of communal hunting over individual hunting, and the dangers of raids by Blackfoot and Arrapaho Indians were incentives to remain together. Thus they came to form bands, and the band activities were controlled by definite leaders. Neither the authority of the leader nor the size of the band were absolute. They depended largely on the persuasiveness of the individual who assumed the role of leader.

The report is the result of a study conducted by Dr. Steward at intervals for 12 years, during which he visited some isolated groups never before studied by ethnologists. —*Clipped.*

The easiest way to seem good is to be good.—*Xenophon.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE MYSTERIOUS ARROWS

(Concluded)

The girls were not so hungry and soon finished their dinner and hurried down to the camping place.

"Oh, I say—let's hide the basket and ourselves around the corner of the hill away from the cave. The boys will think that we did not come this time and we will surprise them when we call them to supper," suggested Mary.

"That's just the thing. They were real mean about letting us come, as if the camp isn't ours as well as theirs. We'll scare them up this time—for they sure love to eat," said Sally as they scrambled through the bushes into the woods along the hillside.

"Why, see here!" cried Sally. "Here's a red arrow nailed to a tree pointing farther around the hill!"

"And—here's another!" called Mary who had run on ahead.

"And another on this tree!" added Sally, venturing on farther along the path through the thick woods. "See! They all point in the same direction. What can it mean?" she gasped—for the boys had told them nothing of the other arrows.

"You don't suppose that bandits could be hiding back there around the hill and are trying to lure people to their den!" cried Mary, the timid one.

"It certainly does look scary and spooky!" admitted Sally who was generally very brave-hearted.

"Oh, oh! Let's run back and tell the boys!" said Mary.

So they hurriedly retraced their steps to the camp and on to the cave. There they found the boys talking in such loud, excited tones that they didn't notice that the girls had disobeyed Sam's strict orders.

Ned was holding up a bundle of red arrows bound together with a narrow leather belt. "It's a challenge all right," he declared, "and they weren't here this morning."

"And see!" called Andy, who had been examining the ground. "There aren't any tracks leading toward the creek. How did they get here?"

"I didn't know that any one in this country had real arrows. These are feather-tipped like real Indian arrows," said Sam.

"Then—perhaps real Indians are hidden back there. These are just like the arrows nailed to the trees around the hillside," said Mary.

"Around the hillside! Where? What do you mean?" cried Sam.

Sally then told them of what she and Mary had discovered on the wooded hillside.

"It's spooky!" cried Mary. "Let's run!"

"Huh! Let's go and see those arrows. Those Oak Hall boys must have crept around the hill to surprise us. We'll show them a thing or two!" said Sam boastfully.

Farther and farther the guiding arrows led them, around the curve of the hillside into an open meadow-like place. Then—a terrible buzzing—and the air was suddenly filled with a shower of arrows. And then three figures in fringed buckskin and feathered headdresses emerged from some bushes with wild whoops. Even the boys shrank back affrighted.

But in a moment, Sally advanced and called, "Hey, there! We've a Golden Rule Circle in our Sunday school, too!"

"Sally! What do you mean! They're Indians, sure. Let's run!" cried Mary.

"But Indians don't wear patent-leather slippers. And there's the emblem of the Golden Rule Circle drawn on the last arrow!" declared Sally, as the advancing figures pulled off their headdresses and revealed the brown-stained faces of a strange boy and two girls.

"Why, who are you?" stammered Sally. "Where did you come from?"

"Only from Arizona! But we have been living over the hill at the Jewett place for three months!" explained the older girl, with an accusing look at the girls. "We are not Indians. We are

white, and yet not a single boy or girl has been to see us. I was a member of the Golden Rule Circle in our Sunday school."

A shamed silence fell upon the questing party, especially the girls who belonged to the Circle. Every one of them knew that some strange youngsters had moved to the Jewett place, but they had been so taken up with each other that they had not given a thought to the loneliness of the newcomers.

"But—you didn't start to school or Sunday school!" ventured Sally.

"No, for at first we were getting over the measles. But we are well, now, and Jack has been slipping arrows over to the boys. When we saw you playing down here we couldn't stand it any longer. We took this way to get acquainted with you—if you care to know us," explained the same girl.

And then the smaller girl said, "We had lots of nice friends out in Arizona."

The detective party hung their heads, but the boy called out, "Oh, well, we must not harbor malice. I see you all are sorry, so come on everybody. You are invited to the Hullabaloo," and he started off, followed by his sisters and more slowly by the others.

It turned out that these youngsters had a sure-enough camp outfit and they explained that their father had run a store for tourists and given them the things. They were very friendly and a merry time was had until almost night.

As the visitors trudged homeward, Mary said, "Well, hereafter, I am not going to be 'forgetful of strangers.' Suppose we moved out to Arizona and not a single boy or girl came to see us!"

And Sally grinned at the boys. "Remember," she said, "it was the 'tagging girls' who found out who it was that brought over those mysterious arrows."

—Courtesy of *The Beacon.*

"You don't like my pastry? Why, I was making pastry before you were born."

"Maybe, but why serve it now?"

LAURIE'S LUCKY PENNY

LAURIE LANCEY stood in front of Wendell's store. A wonderful bicycle was on display, and Laurie wanted that bicycle very much. But he knew that money was not plentiful in the Lancey family, so he saw little hope of getting the shiny new bicycle.

On his way home Laurie passed the residence of "Old Lady" Hubbard. She stood at the window and beckoned to Laurie. "Would you get me some sugar at the store, Laurie?" she asked as he stepped to the door.

"Certainly, Mrs. Hubbard," he answered cheerfully.

"Here's the money," and the old lady carefully counted into his hand two nickels, a dime, and five pennies. As Laurie put the money into his pocket he dropped one of the pennies. Picking it up he saw that it was a very old coin. He had heard that sometimes old coins were worth a lot of money. He got a bright idea. He would substitute one of his own pennies for the old one of Mrs. Hubbard's, and turn the old one in on a premium. There would be no harm in this, Laurie tried to tell himself, because he was not robbing Mrs. Hubbard, since he had put a penny in place of the old one. Then Laurie went and bought the sugar, and delivered it to Mrs. Hubbard.

When he returned to his home he wrote immediately for a coin catalogue. The old coin was still in his pocket, and he looked at it again and again. What could it be worth? He had heard someone say that sometimes old coins were worth as much as a hundred dollars! O boy! He could buy that bicycle he saw in the window! Even for half that amount! Surely the old coin was worth as much as the bicycle!

Laurie Lancey had a hard time going to sleep that night. He thought first of the old coin, then of the bicycle, and then—there was something else. If the coin was worth a lot of money—whom did the coin really belong to—to himself or to Mrs. Hubbard? Laurie's conscience worked overtime.

After breakfast Laurie went straight

to Mrs. Hubbard and told her about the old coin. "Whatever it brings will be yours," he told her; "we will know in a few days."

The "few days" seemed very long to Laurie. But finally the catalogue came. No, the coin was of the wrong year, and was worth only face value.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Hubbard," Laurie said as he informed her. "We have had all our trouble for nothing."

That afternoon Laurie received a telephone message from Dr. Phillips. He wanted Laurie to come to his office. Laurie was mystified, but he went at once.

Dr. Phillips greeted Laurie with a smile. "I'm glad you came so promptly, Laurie. Mrs. Hubbard told me about you, and that old penny. I am looking for a boy I can trust, to run errands for me. Some of them are rather confidential. I believe you have proved yourself to be a boy that can be trusted. But you cannot run all the errands on foot. You will have to have a bicycle. So I will let you pick any bicycle you want, and you can pay for it out of your earnings."

Laurie forgot to thank Dr. Phillips. He dashed out of the office over to "Old Lady" Hubbard's. "I'd like to have that penny again, Mrs. Hubbard, if you don't mind. Here's another one for it.

"You see—it's my lucky penny, and it will help me to remember that it pays to be honest. And that old penny *is* worth a lot more to me than one cent!" And as Laurie started to go, he exclaimed, "And this penny has helped me get that bicycle, too!"

—Adapted from *Albert A. Rand* in *The Young Crusader.*
(Courtesy of *Sunshine Magazine.*)

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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